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THE ROMAN FESTIVALS OF THE PERIOD OF THE REPUBLIC: an Introduction to the Study of the Religion of the Romans. By W. WARDE FOWLER, M.A. London and New York: The Macmillan Co., 1899. Pp. ix + 373. \$1.25.

IT is coming to be increasingly accepted among us as a sound doctrine that the institutions of religion are both older and more stable than its mythology or its doctrine. The attention of students in this field is, therefore, becoming more and more exclusively directed to this aspect of it. The proper approach to the investigation of a religion is through its organized worship. Here are imbedded the survivals or are observed the actual living elements of its earliest life. The importance of such a book as Fowler's for the study of Roman religion, therefore, cannot be overestimated, and in a very real sense it will mark an epoch in the study of the subject among English students. The workmanship also is of the very best style. It is characteristic of the English school to which Mr. Fowler belongs that he expresses independence of, and often a kindly contempt for, the audacious and unrestrained critical activity of the Germans, and this attitude will be somewhat unwelcome to the many who would prefer to go wrong with a brilliant German investigator than to be right with Mr. Fowler, who is sober and cautious to what might seem to be an excessive extent. Yet no one who has entered the thorny thicket of the Roman festivals will reproach the author for his caution, and every student cannot fail to be grateful for the wise, learned, and judicious direction which this volume affords. For any future investigation of Roman religion it is indispensable.

G. S. GOODSPEED.

THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO.

DIE ANTIKE KUNSTPROSA, vom VI. Jahrhundert vor Chr. bis in die Zeit der Renaissance. Von EDUARD NORDEN. 2 Bände. Leipzig: Verlag von B. G. Teubner, 1898. Pp. xviii + i + 969. M. 28.

NORDEN's principal thesis is that the tradition of ornate, florid, poetical, antithetic prose may be traced in a continuous unbroken line from the time when Plato parodied the Gorgian figures to the age in which Bacon noted as the first distemper of learning that "men began to hunt more after words than matter," and so "the flowing and watery vein of Osorius, the Portugal bishop," grew to be in price. The "Asiatic" eloquence which Cicero tells us divided the schools with Atticism was a revival of the style of the Sophists. Seneca and his school

among the Latins, and the new Greek Sophistic under Hadrian and the Antonines, consciously renewed the same tradition. The Latinists of the Italian and Spanish Renaissance were guided by Socrates and Cicero to the same models. From them were directly derived the Gongorisms, marinisms, Guevarisms, euphemisms, and all the other affected or flashy styles of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Thus all the ornate, conceited, flamboyant prose of the western world descends in the direct line from Gorgias, or rather from Heracleitus and Empedocles, who anticipate him in the adornment of prose by pointed antithesis, frigid conceits, nicely balanced cola, and jingling rhythms.

This thesis obviously admits of an enormous amount of interesting illustration, and as obviously is incapable of proof. Unregenerate man has a natural taste, not only for bathos, but for tawdry poetical prose. The Greeks here as everywhere were the first in the field. Plato's Gorgianisms, his Πανσανίου δὲ πανσαμένον, his ὦ λῶστε Πῶλε, and the pretty extravagances of Agathon's speech in the "Symposium" have always been familiar to all who had any tincture of Greek letters. It is, then, always possible that any given conceited writer may have derived his first hint or inspiration thence. But conceits, gaudy ornament, and poetic rhythms are as natural to some temperaments as mothers' milk. The extent of the influence exercised by the tradition is a question of evidence in each individual case.

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THE HISTORY OF YIDDISH LITERATURE IN THE NINETEENTH CENTURY. By LEO WIENER. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1899. Pp. xv+402. \$2, *net*.

THE strong immigration of Russian and Polish Jews into England and into the United States, which began in 1882 in consequence of the fierce persecutions which commenced in Russia with the reign of Alexander III., has awakened a lively interest in that peculiar literature and language which today is exclusively the property of this class of people. So the word "jargon," or Judeo-German, has given place to the more concise "Yiddish," the misspelled German word for "Jewish." The dialect can hardly be dated back of the sixteenth century, although the Jews must have at all times spoken a language peculiar to them. It was natural that such Jews as lived among nations whose culture was of a distinctly separate character, and especially in a time